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Panel Discussion

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I'd like to say that I feel like everything has been said, but I think there is maybe one other step we can take in the next six minutes.

As I first read through both of these talks, I was reminded of something that one of my mentors at BYU had written while I was a student here in the seventies, a man named Arthur Henry King who was a professor of English here. At one point Arthur wrote, "The important thing is not to dwell upon our favorite things in the scriptures. That is self indulgence. It is important that we concentrate on those parts of the scriptures that we don't like much. Be mistrustful of what you like most and listen carefully to what you have an impulse to reject."

And so as I read President Kimball's talk I was particularly conscious, like Kory, of the things I found irritating, or the things I found disagreeable, and in some cases things that I really didn't want to hear. (And of course I understand that this says a great deal more about me than it says about President Kimball.) But I was also reminded as I thought about this quotation from Arthur King, of a remarkable statement the Prophet Joseph Smith made when he said, "By proving contraries, truth is made manifest."

We all understand from our reading of the Book of Mormon, in 2 Nephi 2, that opposition is built into the very fabric of our existence, and if this were not so, the gospel plan would fail. So, I'd like to suggest to you that President Kimball's talk, in my mind, stimulated some thinking about a number of oppositions. Let me suggest to you what some of those might be, or certainly were for me.

BYU:

- Are we leaven in the loaf in the world that we live in, or are we the city on a hill?
- Are we a light in the dark or are we a refuge?
- Do we spend our time and talents in church service, which many of you know can be extraordinarily demanding, or in the service of our art, which as Kory has pointed out is also extraordinarily demanding?
- Can we do it all?
- Are we interested in art and in work and in scholarship that yields good public relations, or are we interested in art and scholarship that grapple in the conflict of life in a fallen world?
- Do we depend on the world's artistic traditions, or are we developing our own traditions?
- Are we interested in secular truth or in saving truth?
- Are we interested in sanctifying the secular or in rejecting the secular?
- Are we interested in excluding the world from what we do (that's the refuge part) or including the world (that's the sanctifying part)?
- Are we interested in intellectual and spiritual openness, or withdrawal from an

- increasingly evil and complex world?
- Are we to be, as President Kimball suggests, examples of normalcy and happiness in our homes, or examples of struggle and purification and repentance?
 - How do we resolve, as many see us as Mormons or Latter-day Saints, the arrogance of certainty, against the humility of doubt? Or, alternatively, how do we resolve the humility of our certainty, against, what for many of the world, is the arrogance of their doubt?
 - Are we interested in the hatred of the world, or the honor of the world?
 - When we disagree internally here, within our own college, are our disagreements about taste or about morality? Or, and I suspect this is not the case, fundamental issues of basic religion?

I remember another mentor of mine, Harold I. Hansen who was the Chair of the Department of Speech and Dramatic Arts, who was a great mentor of Lael Woodbury's as well, telling me once that he'd had a conversation with a general authority who shall remain nameless. The general authority expressed his concern that Brother Hansen had chosen a career in theater rather than a career in law and business and felt like perhaps he had wasted a portion of his life – even though Brother Hansen was the defining figure in theater here at BYU for twenty years or more, was the director of the Hill Cumorah Pageant, and had contributed hugely to the Church.

One of the great things that seems to me President Kimball did when he first delivered his “Education for Eternity” was he gave artists permission to be part of the community of Saints, in a very real and very public way. And I am grateful for that permission. One of the things I longed for when I was a student here at BYU was role models. Role models as film makers. And there weren't many. Any. And now that situation has changed dramatically, and many of the role models that our students look to now are students themselves who graduated from Brigham Young University. This is an enormous jump, both qualitatively and quantitatively in the last twenty or twenty-five years.

President Kimball's talk took me back to two other comments that Arthur Henry King made that I'd like to direct to you as well, knowing that you have all read President Kimball's talks and don't need me to quote from them. Arthur said on another occasion, “Art does not draw directly from moral standards; it is too deep for that. It draws from the religious power behind those moral standards. If art and morality are connected directly, art etiolates, or [in other words] it withers.”

Then he went on to say, and this for me leads to comment from President Kimball that I'll close with:

It is not possible to formulate the good; it is only possible to recognize the good in a good soul. And a good soul, a perfect soul, is what we're given to follow. And following a soul is very different from following a principle.

The soul that I have chosen to follow, however imperfectly, is the living presence of Christ. And I believe it is the presence of the Savior at this university, through the spirit

of the Holy Ghost that will resolve these contraries for me, and I think for all of us if we act in faith.

Finally, and so meaningfully to me, President Kimball said at the close of the “Second Century” address, and I think, taking into consideration how in our time ‘the dark is rising,’ to use the phrase of that famous book :

We appreciate the effectiveness of the programs here at BYU, but we must do better in order to be better. And we must be better. Why? For the sake of the world. ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son .’

And I so testify to you that that is true.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.